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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE  
THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION  
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#### HEADLINES

##### MASS APPEAL

Mosul suicide attack posted on Ansar al-Sunna webpage -  
Hurriyet  
Solana initiative for a solution in Cyprus - Aksam 12/26  
New York Times: Armenia grows lonelier - Milliyet  
'Orange' comes out of Ukrainian ballot box - Aksam  
Pro-West Yushchenko wins Ukraine presidency - Sabah  
Russia warns US against meddling in Ukraine affairs - Aksam

##### OPINION MAKERS

Bloody Christmas in Baghdad: 9 killed in suicide car attack  
- Cumhuriyet 12/26  
Isaiah Wilson: US didn't heed insurgency, may lose war in  
Iraq - Zaman 12/26  
Rumsfeld 'woos' US troops in Iraq - Radikal 12/25  
'TRNC PM' invites Greek Cypriots to negotiation table - Yeni  
Safak  
Two-thirds of Greeks oppose Turkey in EU - Zaman 12/26  
Rauf Denktas: We may choose armed struggle if Turkey  
abandons us - Radikal  
Solana may become the new Cyprus mediator - Cumhuriyet 12/26  
Tsunami horror in Asia - Cumhuriyet

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Sharon promises free elections in Palestine - Cumhuriyet  
Iran doesn't want US at nuclear talks with EU - Cumhuriyet

#### BRIEFING

Syria, Turkey heading toward strategic partnership - Syrian  
PM: In an exclusive interview with "Zaman," Syrian PM  
Muhammed Naci Otri said his people had 'deep respect' for PM  
Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's policy on Iraq, and Erdogan's  
strong reaction against Israeli conduct in Palestine. 'Our  
newly developing strategic relationship with Ankara brings  
bilateral cooperation on regional and global affairs,' Otri  
stressed, adding that such a partnership would not mean an  
alliance against 'third parties.' Otri noted that Turkish  
President Sezer will be visiting Syria soon. A free trade  
deal signed during PM Erdogan's visit to Damascus will  
enable the sides to expand bilateral trade to the highest  
level, the Syrian PM added. He said that the US and Israel  
will some day realize that improving ties between the two  
neighbors will serve US and Israeli interests as well.  
'Israel, by constantly pursuing a 'divide and rule' policy,  
will be made uncomfortable by the rapprochement between  
Turkey and Syria,' Otri claimed. On Iraq, Otri said that  
'unfortunately, peace and stability have been established.  
We must act with Turkey against the American occupation and  
the intimidation campaign in Iraq, he continued.' Otri  
underlined that Syria shares Ankara's concerns about a  
prospective Kurdish state in Iraq. Otri emphasized that  
Syria regard the situation in Iraq as a continuation of the  
Arab-Israeli conflict. 'Today,' he added, 'Washington  
ignores the 1991 Madrid Agreement between Israel and Syria,  
in which the sides agreed on a land-for-peace deal.' 'The  
radical government in Tel Aviv follows suit,' he said. Otri  
added that Syria is reluctant to see a break in dialogue  
with the US. He strongly denied accusations that Syrian  
fighters have assisted Iraqi insurgents: 'We asked a  
visiting Iraqi delegation headed by PM Allawi for hard proof  
to confirm terrorist assistance by Damascus. They don't  
have any. All the Iraqis could tell us was that the US and  
British have put pressure on them to blame Syria,' Otri  
said. He noted that several US military commanders have  
praised Syria's success under Syria's border security  
agreement with Iraq. 'The US does not want to admit failure  
in the struggle against the resistance in Iraq, so they  
choose to blame other countries,' Otri claimed.  
Iranian FM visits Turkey: Iranian FM Kamal Kharazi arrived  
in Ankara on Friday for a surprise visit for talks with

Turkish leaders on Iraq and bilateral issues. Kharazi, who is on a regional tour covering Syria and Lebanon, met with President Sezer, PM Erdogan and FM Gul. Kharazi shared with Erdogan his concerns over the changes to the demography of Kirkuk, weekend papers report. Ahead of the January 30 polls in Iraq, both Ankara and Tehran have called for the participation of all ethnic groups in the elections.

Ankara's new Cyprus plan: Turkish FM Abdullah Gul agreed with 'TRNC FM' Serdar Denktas last Friday on a new joint strategy for a possible new UN initiative on the reunification of Cyprus, "Sabah" reports. The Turks want EU negotiations for Ankara's membership to the European bloc and UN-backed Cyprus talks to be carried out in parallel but separate tracks. If Nicosia pressures the EU to convince Ankara to recognize the Greek Cypriot administration during Cyprus peace talks, Turkey will leave the negotiation table, according to "Sabah." Ankara has asked the UN and EU to start talks in May 2005. Turkey expects Britain, which will take over the EU term presidency in June, to play an active role in the negotiations. Despite a demand by the EU for a partial withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus, Ankara will keep its 30,000 troops in north Cyprus until a solution is reached. The Turks want the latest Annan Plan submitted to referendum last April to be the departure point for new talks, "Sabah" claims, adding that a solution that would go beyond the UN blueprint would be unacceptable.

CHP leader: US should frighten Greek Cypriots: Opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Deniz Baykal is pessimistic about a settlement in Cyprus before the EU begins membership talks with Turkey unless the US and UK begin direct flights to north Cyprus and threaten Nicosia that recognition will follow. Baykal said on CNN-Turk that 'other European countries' should also push the Greek Cypriots for a solution.

Turkish businessman abducted in Iraq: Prominent Turkish businessman Kahraman Sadikoglu was abducted by unidentified insurgents in Iraq, the Turkish media reported over the weekend. On Saturday, Turkey's NTV news channel aired footage showing a man identifying himself as Sadikoglu explaining that he and one of his employees, Ahmet, had been kidnapped. Sadikoglu added that his captors were taking good care of him and his worker, and asked their relatives back in Turkey not to worry. Sadikoglu, among the richest businessmen in Turkey, is the owner of an Istanbul-based shipping line that won contracts to remove the wreckage of sunken ships in the Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war. 'We will do whatever is necessary. We hope he is alive,' FM Abdullah Gul said, adding that the businessman had been missing for a week. Some media reports suggested that the militants had asked for a ransom of \$25 million. Turks constitute 30 percent of the foreigners abducted in Iraq, "Reuters" reported.

Another Turkish trucker killed in Iraq: A Turkish driver was shot dead near the city of Beyci, north of Baghdad, Monday papers report. The identity of the Turkish driver was not immediately available.

Former DEP lawmakers form new party: Former Kurdish lawmaker Leyla Zana and her colleagues from the former DEP Party, some Kurdish politicians, and lawyers of jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan launched a new Kurdish-based political party, the 'Democratic Society Movement' (DTH), in Diyarbakir over the weekend. The group announced their program, highlighted by a call for a democratic solution to the Kurdish problem, demands for legal guarantees for the Kurdish identity and cultural rights, and the removal of restrictions on broadcasts in Kurdish.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION:

-- Ukraine  
-- North Korea  
-- Syria

"Elections in Ukraine"  
Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative "Turkiye" (12/27:  
"There were a record number of observers to cover the elections in Ukraine. Americans made up the vast majority of these 13,000 observers. It seems that Yanukovic has no chance to be elected this time, as Yushchenko leads in all the exit polls. . The strong international interest in Ukraine stems partly from the strength of the Ukrainian diaspora in the US and in Europe. They have committed themselves to being both anti-Russian and anti-communist. . If Yushchenko becomes the new president, which seems very likely, he will work for Ukraine's membership in the EU. In the event he is successful, Ukraine would become, after the UK, the EU member country with the closest ties to the United States."

"North Korea"

Zafer Atay wrote in the economic-political "Dunya" (12/27):  
"North Korea is exerting all of its energy and resources to develop a nuclear program and ballistic missiles, and to feed massive army of 1.5 million men. North Korea continues to receive food aid from the US, Japan, and South Korea, and, oddly enough, state-controlled television and radio continue to make propaganda against these countries. The international community, including Russia and China, are trying to convince the North Korean administration to give up its nuclear program. Washington has already declared North Korea to be part of the 'axis of evil.' There is growing speculation that North Korea will be the 'third target' of the United States, after the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq."

"A New Era with Syria"

Kamuran Ozbir wrote in the nationalist "Ortadogu" (12/27):  
"The close relations between Syria and Turkey take place in a new atmosphere of geopolitical change. The change in leadership in Damascus has brought a new international approach, particularly in the post-9/11 period. The US occupation of Iraq, the Israel factor, and the pro-Islamic AKP administration in Turkey have forced a reassessment in Syrian foreign policy and helped to set the stage for stronger Turkey-Syria ties. . The current phase of Turkish-Syrian relations seems to be based on pragmatism rather than ideology, and has a potential to grow even further."

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